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A YOUTH "EKIDEN GIRLS" STORY

群青

GUN-JOU

RUN-17
It was not an "Unforeseeable" Accident

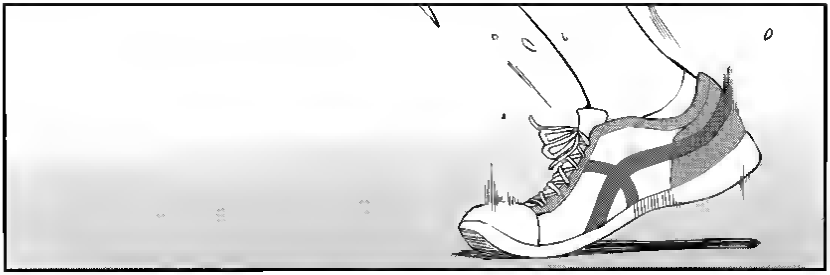
原作 坂本 虹 Kou Sakamoto
作画 桐原いづみ Idumi Kirihara

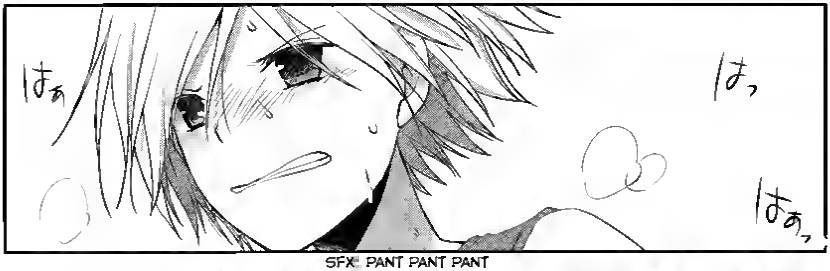
THE FATE OF THE TEAM THAT SWORE ON THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP...
AND SO
IT HAPPENED AT THE PREFECTURAL QUALIFIER...

27
One leg,
3000m.

Ami ran in front from the start.

She steadily pulled away from the one in 2nd place.





SFX: PANT PANT PANT

Then, just before the relay point,
on the last straight stretch of road....

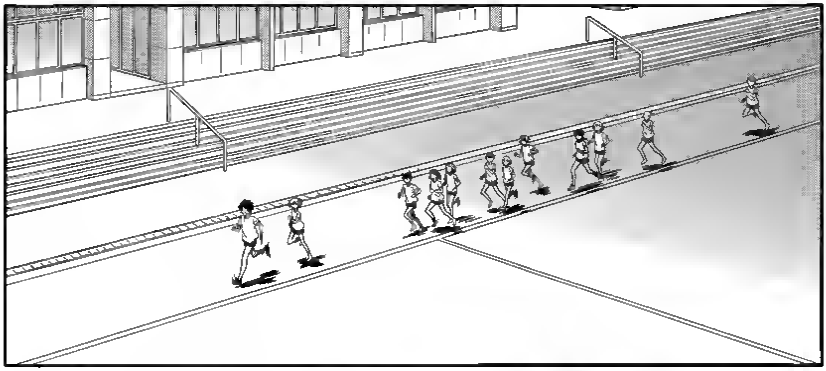
Ami's leg
suffered a fracture.

TO SAY BECAUSE OF THAT, SHINKAI-SAN NO LONGER DESERVES TO CARRY THE TASUKI IS...
SHE'S RIGHT.
WASN'T THAT JUST AN ACCI-DENT?
BUT...
THAT WASN'T SHINKAI-SAN'S FAULT!
ACCI-DENT...?
NO,
THAT'S JUST TOO CRUEL!

!
THAT WAS NOT AN "UNFORSEEABLE" ACCIDENT.
AMI WAS HIDING A STRESS FRACTURE.
Y... YEAH, THAT'S ...
THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL SMALL CRACKS IN THE BONE...
IT'S A CONDITION THAT OFTEN OCCURS IN RUNNERS, ESPECIALLY YOUNG RUNNERS LIKE US.
IT WILL RECOVER IF YOU REST IT A FEW WEEKS.
HOWEVER...

IF YOU CONTINUE TO RUN WITHOUT RESTING IT
CRACKS BEYOND COUNTING WILL KEEP FORMING
IN THE END, IT HAPPENED TO AMI...
WHY WOULD SHE PUSH HERSELF TOO FAR LIKE THAT...?
IF WE WON THE CHAMPIONSHIP, THE OLD MAN WOULDN'T DIE.
AT THE TIME, THAT'S WHAT WE REALLY BELIEVED.

...or should have.



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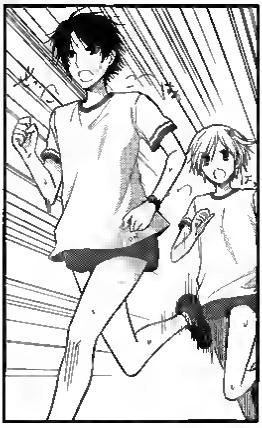

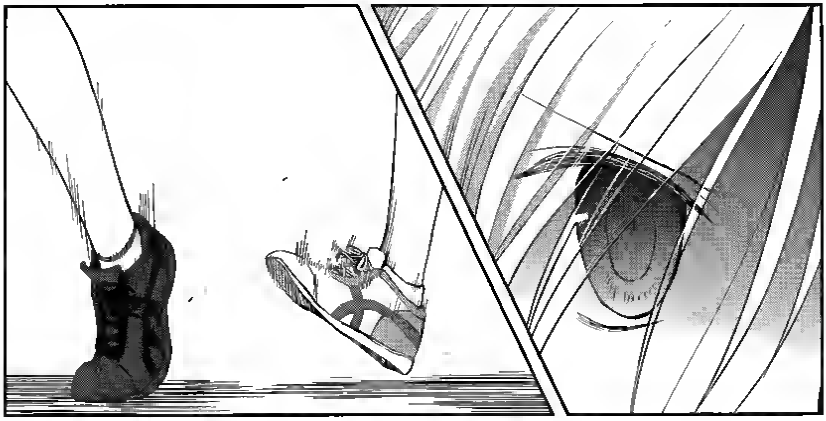

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All of us,
IT'S GONE DOWN AGAIN...
carrying a "purpose" too heavy for us,
little by little,
began to break down.
THE PREFECTURAL QUALIFIER WAS COMING UP.
THE CONDITION OF EVERYONE EXCEPT AMI BEGAN TO FALL.
.....
横浜光

TSUBASA'S POOR CONDITION, ESPECIALLY, WAS CLEAR TO EVERYONE.
SUCH KINDNESS
ALSO BECOMES HEAVY CHAINS.
.....
TSUBASA'S KIND.
SHE'S TOO NICE A PERSON.
AMID ALL THAT, AMI ALONE LOOKED IN GOOD SHAPE.

The prefectural qualifier approached, and the substitute advising teacher chose the participating members by order of their times
It was at that time that I finally noticed.
AMI,
THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT ON THE WAY HOME.

HIDING A LEG INJURY?
AREN'T YOU

YOU'LL SWITCH OUT WITH TSUBASA FOR THE PREFECTURAL QUALIFIER.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, IORI-SENPAI?

I KNEW IT...

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE THAT GOING ON AT ALL.

I CAN TRUST IN YOU?
YES.
.....
REALLY ?
IT'S THE TRUTH.
MORE IMPORTANTLY,
THIS ENOSHIMA PREFECTURAL QUALIFIER
IS GOING TO BE TOUGH.

SENPAI, YOU AND I
HAVE TO GET A HUGE LEAD IN THE FIRST HALF, OR...

LET'S GIVE IT OUR ALL, IORI-SENPAI.

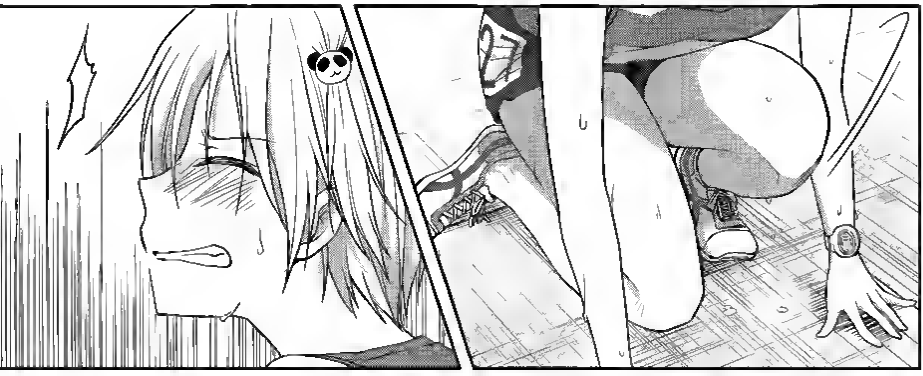
...ER ...
YEAH.

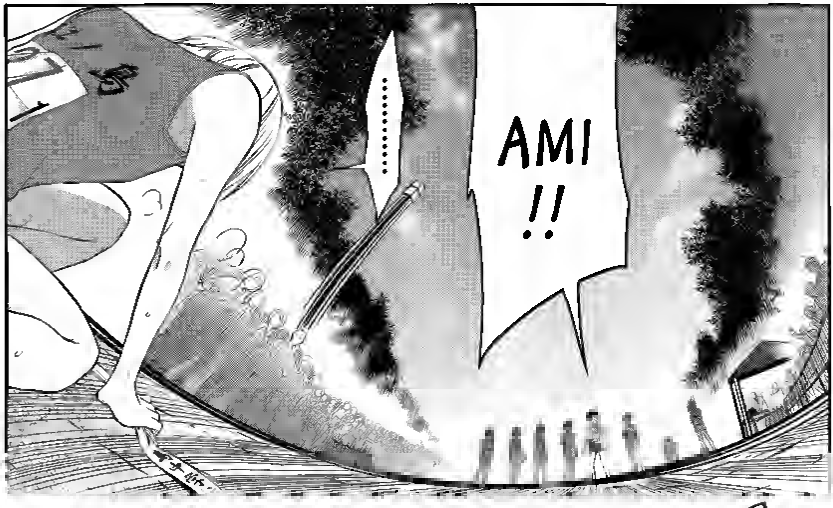
THE TRUTH IS...
BUT...
THE ONE WHO WAS THE MOST "BROKEN"
AMI
WAS AMI.

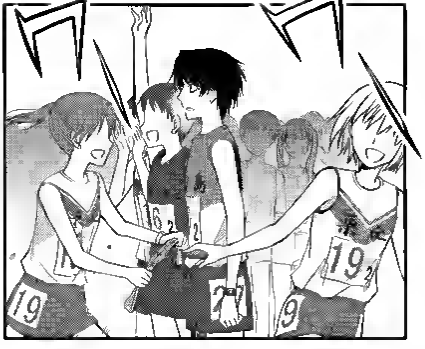
At that moment, Ami...

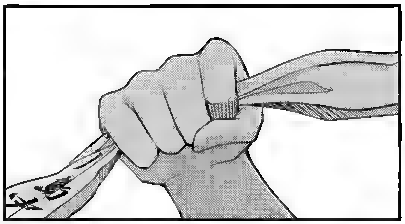
with her broken leg...

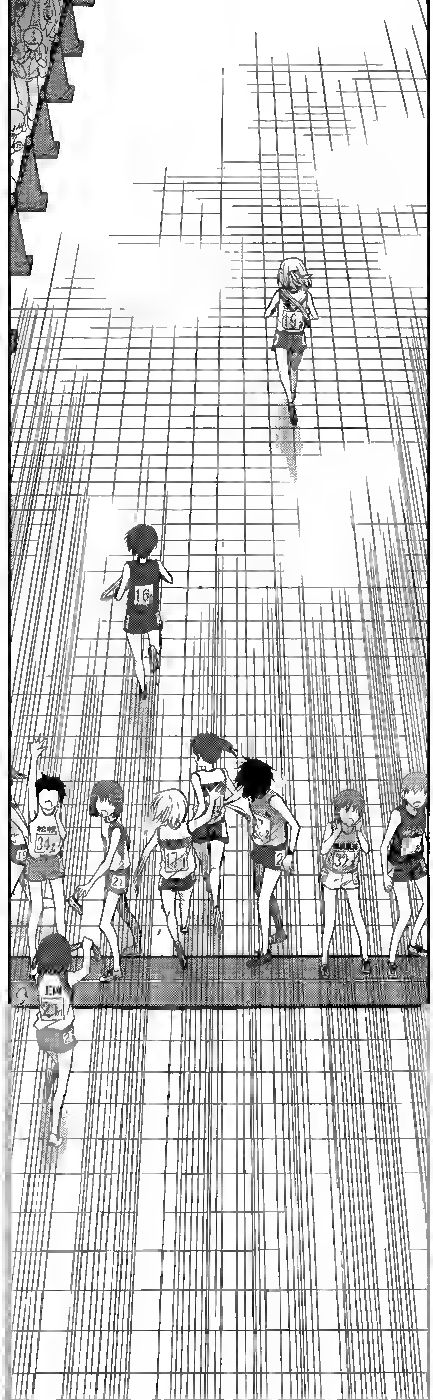
27
16

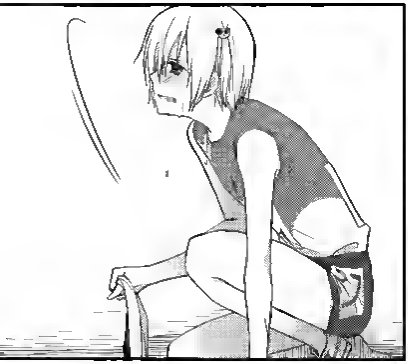


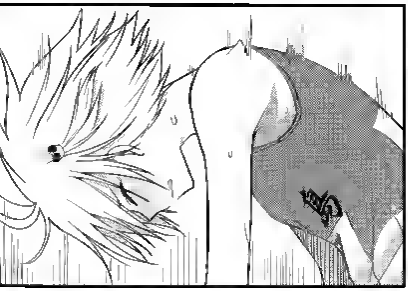

AMI
!!











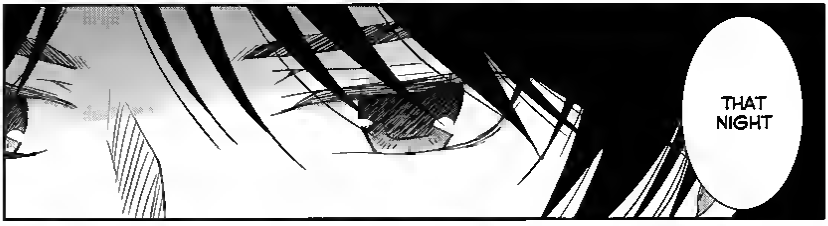
江ノ島
27

27

江ノ島
27
1
2

江ノ島

OLD
MAAAAN
!!


THAT NIGHT

THE OLD MAN PASSED AWAY.

THOUGH SHE WAS DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL, SHE PRETTY MUCH DIDN'T COME TO SCHOOL AT ALL.
WHEN WE COULD FINALLY MEET
IN AMI'S HAND WAS...
LETTER: RESIGNATION
AMI,
SIGN: ENOSHIMA MIDDLE SCHOOL TRACK & FIELD CLUB

……
YOU'RE QUIT-TING?
WHY COULDN'T YOU BE HONEST WITH ME BACK THEN!?
IF I HAD ONLY BEEN TOUGHER
STOP IT, IORI!!

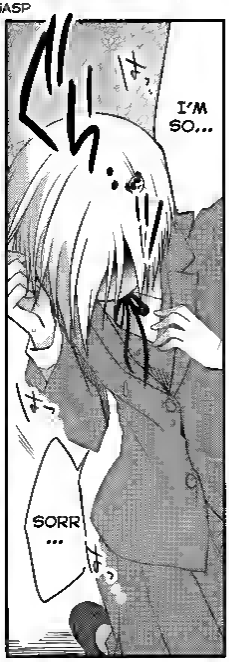
AMI WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO PUSH TOO HARD, ALL BY HERSELF.
AS A SENPAI YOU COULDN'T COUNT ON ME.
I'M SORRY.
NO.
THAT'S WRONG!
I AM THE...

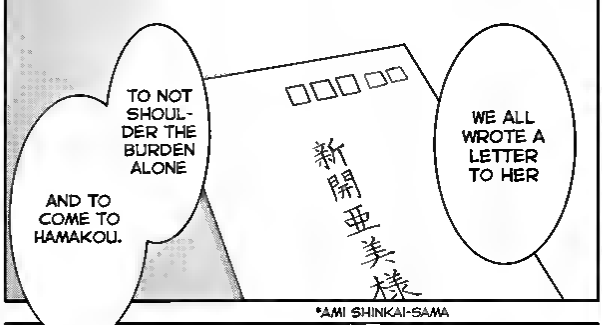
SFX: GASP
SFX PANT
SFX GASP, PANT

I'M THE ONE ...
WHO KILLED ...
THE OLD MAN...

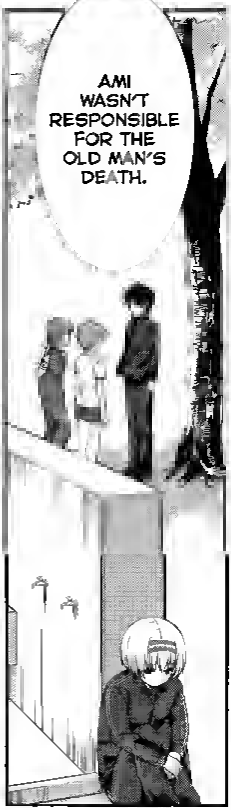
SFX: GASP..

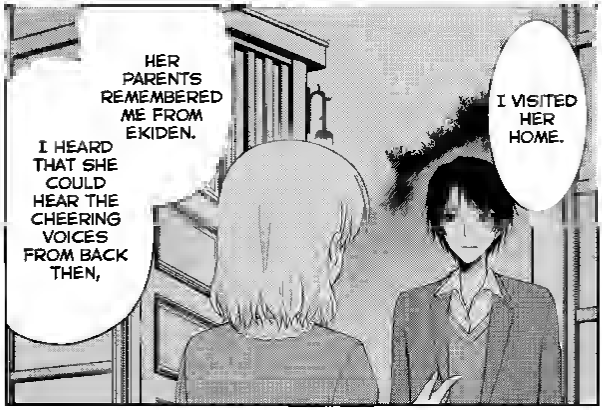
SFX: GASP

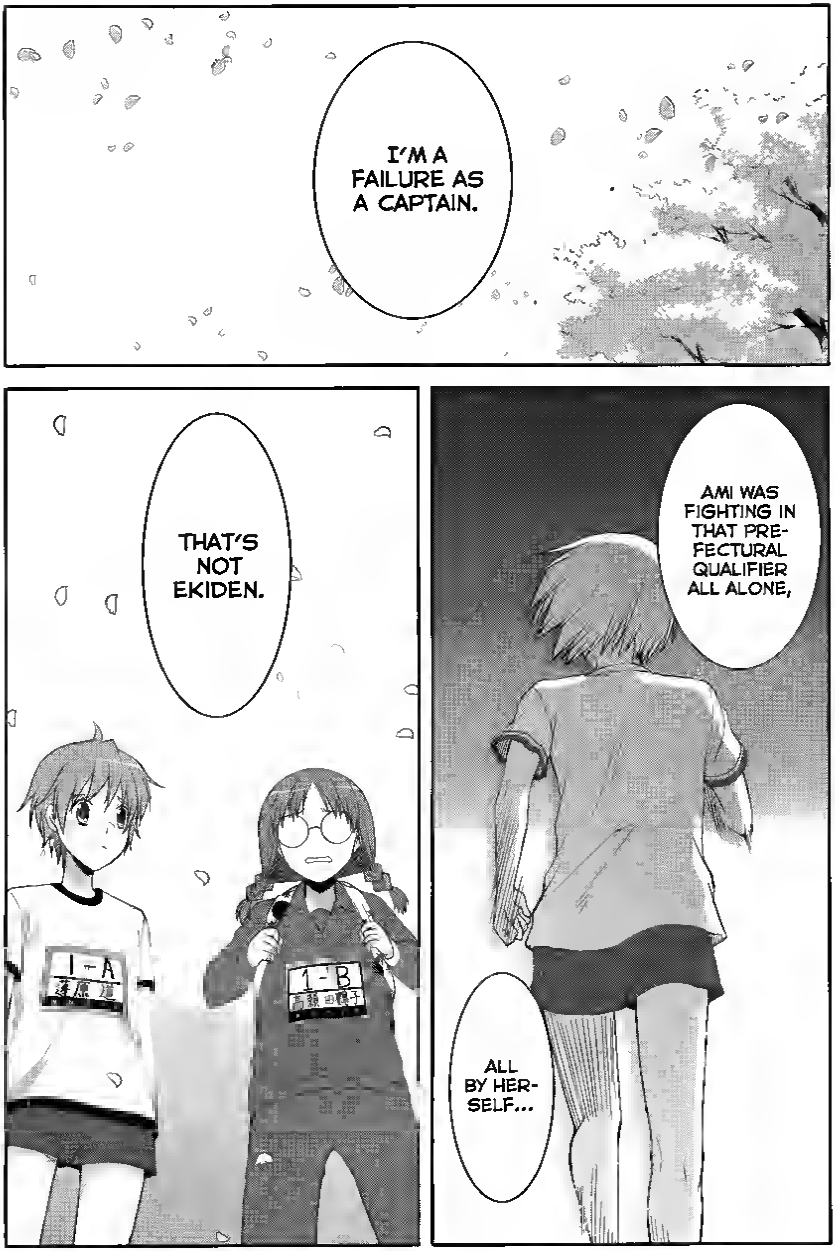




*AMI SHINKAI-SAMA

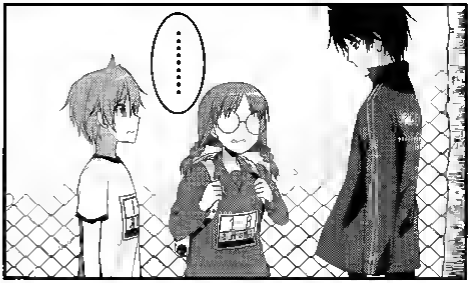





I'M A FAILURE AS A CAPTAIN.
THAT'S NOT EKIDEN.
1-A
1-B
AMI WAS FIGHTING IN THAT PREFECTURAL QUALIFIER ALL ALONE,
ALL BY HERSELF...

I DID SAY THAT SHE HAS NO RIGHT TO BEAR THE TASUKI,
BUT THAT REALLY MEANS THAT "SHE HAS FORGOTTEN WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A COMRADE".

女 学
SHE SAID "SAVE ME"...
SHINKAI-SAN DID.


.....

SHE SAID TO SAVE HER.
THERE MIGHT BE A WAY!

THERE MIGHT BE
JUST ONE WAY
TSUBASA ...
TO SAVE AMI.

I DIDN'T WANT THE OLD MAN TO DIE,
SO I RAN...
AND RAN...
AND RAN...

THE TRAUMA IS REVEALED. AND THE WAY TSUBASA SAYS AMI CAN BE SAVED IS...?

AND BEFORE I KNEW IT

I WAS IN A PLACE I DIDN'T KNOW, ALL BY MYSELF.

I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW TO GET BACK.

TO BE CONTINUED